

A New Taxon of the *Lepidochrysops ortygia* (Trimen) Group (Lepidoptera : Lycaenidae) from the South Western Cape

By C. G. C. DICKSON

No. 30.

Mr G. E. Tite, in his paper "The *Lepidochrysops ortygia* Complex" (*Entomologist*, 97: 1-7, Jan., 1964), included, amongst three new species, the rather small blue *Lepidochrysops* from the Cape Peninsula, under the name of *L. oreas*—with other material represented in the British Museum (N.H.) from as far to the east as Seven Weeks Poort and the Zwartberg Pass. Male specimens from these latter localities were noted as having "decidedly wider dark distal margins on the forewings".

The butterfly which is dealt with in this article was formerly included, by most observers, with nominate *oreas*, but investigation of a representative number of specimens (and comparison of the male genitalia) has provided evidence of its being at least a separate race. The writer prefers to treat it provisionally as a race of *oreas*; factors which it has not been possible to take into account as yet—such as differences which could occur in the 1st instar larvae—might finally give proof of a specific difference. There does seem to be some evidence of the two taxa overlapping in the Bot River—Hermanus areas and confirmation of this would, in itself, point to separate species being involved in the present case. In some respects this butterfly shows closer affinity to *L. quickelbergei* Swane-poel (*Novos Taxa Entomológicos*, 64: 1-10, June, 1969), which was separated, as a species, from *oreas* on the basis of its external appearance alone.

Lepidochrysops oreas junae subsp. nov.

Both sexes of considerably greater average size than *L. oreas oreas* from the type — locality in the Cape Peninsula; forewings tending to be slightly less acute.

Male. Upperside.

All wings, of the violaceous-blue colour of nominate *L. oreas* but the tone varying in some specimens even more than in this race (occasional specimens being, in fact, much lighter and brighter, and two of the paratypes exceptionally so and of a silvery-blue tone reminiscent of *quickelbergei*). Other features similar to those of nominate *oreas*, and with variation in the width of the dark smoky borders, especially in the forewings—a few of the paratypes, though not the holotype, having these decidedly broad.

Underside.

Ground-colour with more light dusting than normally occurs in nominate *oreas* and with more prominent white marking in general in all wings. The dark markings as a whole also decidedly prominent and tending to be more conspicuous against their background.

Forewing. The dusting of white scaling over the inner-half of the wing, is especially noticeable on the veins. The post-median series of dark, white-edged spots, together with the discocellular marking, consistently well developed and more prominent on the whole than in nominate *oreas*.

Hindwing. White suffusion, and marking, very noticeable; the series of white sagittate markings frequently expanded and tending to lose their clear-cut form. The two black spots in area 7, especially the outer one, enlarged as a rule and thus more conspicuous than in nominate *oreas*.

Length of forewing: 15.0-20.0 mm. (18.0 mm., in holotype). The first measurement is that of an unusually small specimen.

Female. Upperside.

In general very similar to the female of nominate *oreas* in colouring and marking, the ground-colour being of a more true, less violaceous blue in some specimens, as in the allotype, and the black marking varying in its development in individual specimens.

Underside.

Characters noted for male repeated in female. The white dusting may not be quite as prominent in all specimens (being rather less so in the allotype) but is usually as noticeable as in male examples.

Length of forewing: 15.75-20.5 mm. (19.5 mm., in allotype). The first measurement is that of an abnormally small specimen.

Body and ancillary parts as in nominate race, apart from the white scaling and hairs possibly being more conspicuous, in some examples.

♂ Holotype, WESTERN CAPE PROVINCE: Klein Drakenstein Mtns., above Du Toit's Kloof (S. side), 26.xi.1972 (C. G. C. Dickson); British Museum Reg. No. Rh. 17316.

♀ Allotype, W. CAPE PROVINCE: data as for holotype; British Museum Reg. No. Rh. 17317.

Paratypes presented to British Museum (N.H.): data as holotype, 1 ♂, 3.iii.1973, 1 ♀ (C.G.C.D.).

Paratypes in the author's collection: as holotype, 8 ♂♂, 1 ♀ (C.G.C.D.); as holotype, 12.xii.1949, 4 ♂♂, 1 ♀ (A. J. Duke); Middenkrantz Berg, Fransch Hoek Mtns., 8.xi.1945, 2 ♂♂, 2 ♀♀ (C.G.C.D.); Tygerstels Kloof Mtns., S.S.W. of Rawsonville, 30.xii.1963, 1 ♂ (C.G.C.D.); Geelbos Laagte, Langeberg Mtns., E. of Montagu, C.P., 1 ♂, 11.xi.1962 (C.G.C.D.).

Paratypes in Coll. Mrs J. V. Sipser: as holotype, 1 ♂, 2 ♀♀ (J.V.S.), 1 ♂ (C.G.C.D.).

Paratype in Coll. Dr Jeffrey Kaplan: Du Toit's Kloof, 22.xii.1972, 1 ♂ (J.K.).

Paratypes in Coll. K. M. Pennington: Fransch Hoek, 6.xii.1957, 1 ♂, 3.x.1946, 1 ♀ (K.M.P.); Helderberg, C.P., 10.i.1963, 1 ♂ (K.M.P.).



3



2



1

